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One upon the Liturgy of the Church
of *England*, Preach'd according to
the last-will of Mr. *John Hutchins*
Citizen and Goldsmith ;

The other against the corruptions of
the Church of *Rome*, Preach'd on
occasion of the present Rebellion
in *Scotland* ;

In the Parish Church of St. *Mary-le-Bow*,
*And published at the particular request of several
of the Audience.*

By *THOMAS NEWTON*, D.D.
And Rector of the said Parish. *K*

L O N D O N :

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*Of forms of prayer and particularly those
of the Church of England,*

A

S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Parish Church of *St. Mary-le-Bow,*

According to the last-will of Mr. *John
Hutchins* Citizen and Goldsmith,

On *St. Mark's day*, 1745.

*When there was a collection for the
Charity Children.*

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T O

Mr. Samuel Sandeforth,

TREASURER,

<i>Mr. Thomas Leach,</i>	<i>Mr. William Caldwell,</i>
<i>Mr. Thomas Paris,</i>	<i>Mr. James Dobson,</i>
<i>Mr. John Drinkwater,</i>	<i>Mr. Henry Oldham,</i>
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<i>Mr. Henry Clarke,</i>	<i>Mr. John Blackall,</i>
<i>Mr. Soper Hayter,</i>	<i>Mr. Michael Martindale,</i>
<i>Mr. Leonard Pead,</i>	

Citizens and Trustees of *Mr. Hutchins's* Charity.

GENTLEMEN,

WHEN I had preached this Sermon at Your desire, You were very importunate with me to publish it. I defer'd it, in hopes that You would think better of it; but upon Your continued application it is given up to You; and I wish only, that it may prove as satisfactory to the Readers, as You said

it was to You and the rest of the Hearers.

Let me now in my turn request of You, to shew Your zeal and affection for the Church of *England*, now especially in these times of danger and trouble, by a constant and devout attendance upon its worship and service. Other means are to be employ'd in our defence besides religion, but without religion all other means will be ineffectual. They, who best discharge their duty to God, will best fulfill their other obligations of loyalty to their King, and love to their Country. And in this confidence of You I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your most faithful

and obedient Servant,

Thomas Newton.

LUKE XI. I.

---*Lord teach us to pray, as John
also taught his disciples.*

P RAYER is a duty necessarily arising from the relation of man to God; and public prayer is as much our duty, as we are members of society, as private prayer is our duty, as we are individual and single persons. That we should therefore pray unto God, all who have any sense of religion are agreed; but they differ greatly as to the *matter* and *manner* of their petitions. There is an excellent dialogue in **Plato* between *Socrates* and *Alcibiades*, wherein is shewn the great difficulty of framing our peti-

* Alcibiades secundus five De precatone.

tions so, as they may prove acceptable to God and beneficial to ourselves; and *Socrates*, sensible of the defects of natural reason, infers from thence the necessity of divine revelation, and expresses his hopes and expectations, that some divine person would be sent from heaven to teach and instruct us as in other parts of our duty, so particularly in the exercise of our devotions. The disciples of our Lord were conscious of the same wants and infirmities; and therefore they apply themselves to him, that he would *teach them to pray as John also taught his disciples*. Our Saviour teaches them accordingly; and in them hath taught us not only the true Object of worship but also the best method of worshipping him, not only what petitions we are to offer at the throne of grace but also the form and manner wherein we are to offer them. And yet there
are

are men, who pretend to be so much wiser than the rest of mankind, as to want none of these assistances and instructions; they are for pouring out their spirit in extemporary prayer, and utterly condemn all set forms: And even of those, who may approve set forms of prayer, some may yet disapprove the forms prescribed in our Liturgy, and imagin that others more convenient and proper may be substituted in their place. For our own vindication and satisfaction therefore in points of such importance we will first attempt to prove *the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer in general*, and secondly endeavor to shew *the excellency of our own form in particular*; if not to convince our adversaries, yet at least to justify ourselves in the use of it.

First

First we are to prove *the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer in general*. And for the sake of brevity as much as of order, our proofs shall be reduced to two kinds, and shall be drawn partly from the *authority of Scripture* and partly from the *reason of the thing*.

1. We have the *authority of Scripture* plainly on our side, and what better authority can we desire? Are any of our modern Sectarists wiser than *Solomon*? but he in his directions for our behaviour in the house of God, forbids all long extemporary prayers; *Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be hasty to utter any thing before God, for God is in Heaven, and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few*. And much to the same purpose the son of *Sirach* exhorts us; *Before thou prayest, prepare thyself, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord*. In the Law of *Moses* the form is prescribed, wherein the

Ecclef. v.
2.

Eccles.
xviii. 23.

the priests should bless the people.

As the people stood in need always of the same blessing, so was it to be implored always in the same words;

The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace; which very form of blessing we still retain in the Com-

Numb. vi.
24, &c.

mination-Office, and in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick. In

like manner the form of blessing at the removing and resting of the

Numb. x.
35, 36.

ark, the form of prayer for the expiation of an uncertain murder, the

Deut. xxi.
7, 8, 9.

form of confession and prayer of him who offereth the basket of first-fruits

Deu. xxvi.
3, &c.

and of him who giveth his third year's tithes are all prescribed and appointed in the Law; and would

such forms have been appointed, if all forms were unlawful? But we need not insist upon *single* proofs, when we can produce a *whole book*

together.

together. For was not the book of Psalms composed for the service of the Temple? And is not this evident from the titles and inscriptions of most of the Psalms themselves? And can you suppose that the *man after God's own heart* was ignorant of the true manner of worshipping him? Nay not only that *David*, but the whole *Jewish* church were in an error from the beginning to the end? But you may conceive that this imperfect way of worship was proper only for that imperfect dispensation of the *Jews*; you may imagin that it favors altogether of their *beggarly elements*, and there should be no such restraint and imposition upon the spirit of Christians. But how then cometh it to pass, that *John* the Baptist delivers a form of prayer to his disciples, as the *Jewish* masters and doctors had also done before him to their disciples? And why is our Saviour so far from reprehending, that

that he follows his example? Would our Saviour have given a set form of prayer to his disciples, if a set form had been any stinting of devotion? Or rather would he have done it, unless it had been an help to devotion? And much more would he have repeated and recommended the same form *twice*, at different times and upon different occasions? As *Joseph* said unto *Pharaoh*, *The dream* Genxli. *was doubled because the thing is* ^{32.} *establish'd by God*; so may it be said in this case, the prayer was doubled, was repeated twice, that it might be established, and together with it the lawfulness and expediency of set forms of prayer might be evinced and established beyond all reasonable doubt and contradiction. Nor were there ever any Christians, who questioned and opposed the use of set forms of prayer, till a century or two ago. The universal practice of the Church from the earliest ages, which

which is the best interpreter of Scripture, hath constantly favor'd it.

Nor secondly let it be pretended, that tho' *Scripture* be *for* us yet *reason* is *against* us; for we have the *reason* of the *thing* on our side as plainly as the *authority* of *Scripture*. A prescribed form of worship is not subject to the same *inconveniences* with extemporary effusions. The great danger of unpremeditated prayer is, lest it should degenerate into a rhapsody of absurdities and enthusiasm; and he must be an uncommon and powerful master indeed of thought and expression, who is able to speak on a sudden and yet speak nothing improper in an address to the majesty of Heaven. A man should be ashamed of appearing with such indigested crudities before his earthly Sovereign, or indeed before any person of understanding. But if there should be nothing absurd and unbecoming, yet the audience must

must first endeavor to understand the words; and then they must weigh and consider the sense and meaning; and then they must deliberate whether such requests are proper for persons in their condition, before they can lawfully join in them; and by that time the minister is passed on to some other subject, which requires the like attention and consideration; and so their curiosity may be raised, and they may exercise their judgment, but there can be scarce any room left for devotion. And as a precomposed form of prayer is not subject to the same inconveniences with extemporary effusions, so neither is it liable itself to any *just objections*. It is so far from obstructing or quenching our devotion as is pretended, that it rather assists and inflames it; the matter and the words are both prepared to our hands, we know before what is to follow that we may lawfully join in it, and no other

other attention is required but to raise our affections. And let me ask, is not the spirit of the congregation equally stunted whether the minister pray in an extemporary or in a composed regular form? And which is more fit and proper for the people to receive a form of prayer from the wisdom and authority of the whole church, or to depend upon the discretion of every single minister? But a precomposed form of prayer is not only liable to no just objection; but hath besides several *advantages* to recommend it. It is more for the *honor* of almighty God, expresses more reverence and devotion, preserves greater propriety and decency of language, and in short surpasses extemporary prayer, as much as sound piety and religion exceed the freaks and rants of fanaticism and enthusiasm. It is likewise more for the *edification* of *men* as well as for the honor of God; for who can question,

question, which is likely to be most instructive and edifying, hasty conceptions, or studied compositions; the thoughts of one, perhaps illiterate, man thrown out without premeditation, or the wisdom of the Church prepared and digested into form and order? It is better not only for the people, but for the *ministers* too; for as it prevents any vain ostentation of their talents in the more learned, so it supplies the more ignorant with what perhaps they could ill compose of themselves; for in every profession there are always some of inferior genius and capacity, and it is good for these to have such a provision made for them. Moreover it better establishes and secures the unity of faith and worship; hinders the heterodox from infusing their particular notions in their prayers, which is perhaps the most artful and plausible way of infusing them; reduces all the Churches

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to

to an uniformity, prevents any disagreement or contradiction in their petitions, and instructs them, as they worship the same God, to worship him with the same mind and voice. And finally it is shewing to all the world the terms of our communion, and giving them a fair opportunity to examin them before they join in it; whereas if there be no stated regular forms, we must have a sort of implicit faith in every minister, assent we know not why and pray for we know not what, just as his temper or interest or caprice or passions shall prompt and incite him. And this you may absurdly call praying by the spirit if you please, but every wise man will say with the Apostle, *I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also.*

1 Cor. xiv.
15.

'Tis easy to say more, but we hope that enough hath been said, to prove *the lawfulness and expediency* of

of set forms of prayer in general, and we shall now, as it was proposed in the second place, endeavor to shew *the excellency of our own form in particular.* Not that a particular examination of all the beauties in our Liturgy, or a particular answer to all the objections which have been made against it, can be proposed or expected in one of these discourses. These things have been done to satisfaction again and again by several learned men, and the books are in every one's hands. Our time will allow us only to make some general reflections.

1. It will very much recommend our Liturgy to consider *how* and by *whom* it was composed, that it was not the production of this or that man, but the result of the wisdom of our governors both in Church and State. The compilers of it were not only the best and wisest men of that age in this nation, but they con-

sulted likewise the most eminent of the divines abroad, and had their approbation of it, and approved it yet farther themselves by dying in it's defence. And since that time it hath received some corrections and improvements; and tho' no work of man can pretend to perfection, yet it hath perhaps as few imperfections as any whatever. In theory possibly it may seem easy to correct and amend it, but it hath been found and will be found extremely difficult in practise.

2. It is another recommendation of our Liturgy, that it is drawn up in *our own mother-tongue*; so that we may all understand it with ease and attend to it with pleasure. In this respect as well as in others our Church is truly primitive and apostolical; for when were prayers in an unknown tongue first introduced into the Church, and what was the occasion of introducing them? Was it

it not because the *Romans* still retained their Latin service, after the Latin language was lost among them by the course of time and inundation of barbarous nations? It is true indeed that God understands our petitions in any language; and he understands as well the breathings of our hearts, if we pray in no language at all. The design of our prayers is not to inform Omniscience, but to acknowledge our own dependence; but how can they properly be said to be *our prayers*, if we do not join in them? And how can we be said to join in them, if we neither understand the sense nor the words? *If I know not the meaning of the voice I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.* It is a happiness therefore that our Service is such as all may join in it, because all understand it; and herein we particularly follow the

1 Cor. xiv.
11.

1 Cor. xiv. 26. precept of the Apostle, *Let all things be done to edifying.*

3. It recommends our Liturgy yet more, that it was composed principally out of *Scripture* or out of *antient Liturgies* and *Fathers*. There are not only several parts and passages borrowed intire, as particularly the Lord's prayer, and the Psalms and Lessons in their monthly and yearly course, and St. *Ambrose's* hymn called *Te Deum* and the prayer of St. *Chrysostom*, and the like: But even where intire parts and passages are not borrowed, and the very words of Scripture or of Fathers are not taken and applied, yet their spirit and manner, their style and character are still preserved; and perhaps there is scarce any collect in our Liturgy, scarce any sentiment or expression that may not be justified by the authority of one or other of them. And what a comfort and satisfaction should it be to us, that
we

we are such a sound part of the Holy Catholic Church, that we thus maintain the Communion of Saints, that we worship God in the same manner as the martyrs and confessors and best of Christians did in the purest ages; and the spirit of their Liturgies, like *Elijah's* upon *Elisba*, hath descended in *a double portion* upon Ours. 2 King. ii. 9.

4. It is a farther recommendation of it, that our prayers are addressed to the *proper object* thro' the *proper mediator*, to the *one God* thro' the *one mediator between God and men* 1 Tim. ii. 5. *the man Christ Jesus*. Each collect begins with a solemn invocation of the one, and concludes with the prevailing merits and intercession of the other. And in this instance again our Church is truly primitive and apostolical, and hath purged away the dregs of later times. For look into the *Roman* missals and manuals of devotion, and you will find as

many prayers directed to the Virgin Mary as to God himself, as many offered thro' the mediation of Saints and Angels, as of the Son of God himself. And yet it is certain, that nothing can be more contrary to the doctrine of Scripture, or a greater deviation from the practise of the catholic Church for more at least than three centuries after Christ. Let us congratulate ourselves therefore, that our worship is restored to it's genuin simplicity and purity. *Rome* Christian as well as *Rome* Pagan may have *Gods many and Lords many, but to us there is but one God the father of whom are all things and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things, and we by him.*

¹Cor. viii.
6.

5. It is besides a great excellence of our Service to have so *many short distinct* petitions, and renders them more fit and easy to be remember'd and repeated. Our Liturgy in this respect

respect may be compared to a string of pearls, every one valuable but altogether almost inestimable. If the whole was disposed in one continued prayer, tho' it should not be tedious, yet it would keep our minds upon the stretch too long together; whereas these breaks and pauses give relief, our souls recover breath as it were, and we return to worship again with new spirit and vigor. Brevity is a beauty in all sorts of composition, and especially when man is addressing himself to God. Long prayers are too much like *preaching* to God Almighty. Sure we are that the Lord's Prayer, which was design'd to be a standard and model for all others, is short as it is comprehensive; and you know not whether to admire it more for it's fulness or it's brevity.

6. The *variety* of our Service is another excellence in the composition of it, and contributes much to the keeping up of our attention and devotion.

votion. A sameness in any thing soon fatigates and wearies us; and it is as difficult to keep the mind as it is the body, long in one posture. But by the beautiful intermixture of Prayer and Praise, of Supplication and Thanksgiving, of Confession and Absolution, of Hymns and Creeds, of Psalms and Lessons, our weariness is relieved, our attention is renewed, and we are led on agreeably from one subject to another, and by means of the *variety* are scarcely sensible of the *length* of our Service. The frame of our Liturgy is somewhat like the frame of the world; 'tis order in variety, and tho' all the parts are different, yet the whole is consistent and regular.

7. What renders it yet more excellent is it's *comprehensiveness*, including all that we can want or desire. The exhortation of the Apostle is religiously observed; and *supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving*
 of

1 Tim. ii.
1, 2.

of thanks are made for all men, for kings and for all that are in authority. Indeed there is nothing that relates either to ourselves or others, nothing that concerns us either as men or members of society; nothing that conduces to our happiness in this world or the world to come, but is comprehended in some or other of the petitions. A form of prayer for general use could not well be made more *particular*; and it is easy, while the minister is reading it, with a sudden glance of thought to appropriate and apply any passages to ourselves and our own case. A great deal is expressed, but more is implied; and our devotions in our closets and in our families we cannot perhaps better express than in the words of our Liturgy, it is so suited to all ranks and conditions, and adapted to all wants and occasions.

8. The congregation have particular reason to be pleased, as they have
have

have a *larger share* in our Service than in any other whatever: and the minister and people mutually raise and inflame each other's devotion. In the Church of *Rome* the congregation are so far from having any share in the service, that they do not so much as understand it; but the priest mutters over his *Latin* prayers to himself, and the people every one their particular prayers to themselves; and so they depart some sooner and some later, just as they happen to have finish'd their devotions. And among our Protestant Dissenters there is commonly one long-winded tedious extemporary prayer; the people are only hearers, and they must hear before they can understand, and they must understand before they can approve, and they must approve before they can join in any petition, all which is impossible to be done in an instant while one is speaking. It is a singular privilege therefore, that
our

our people enjoy, of bearing so large a part in our Service; and it is this that properly denominates ours, what really none else is, a book of *Common Prayer*.

In a word our Liturgy is in every respect excellently contrived and fitted to promote true devotion. The language is so plain as to be level to the capacities of the meanest, and yet the sense so noble as to raise the conceptions of the greatest. And the *manner*, in which our Service is performed, is worthy of the *matter*; our Churches plain and solemn, neither painted and adorned like a theater on the one hand, nor yet intirely unadorned like a common room on the other; our Vestments suitable and becoming, and the very emblem of holiness, for as St. *John* saith, *the fine linnen clean and white is the righteousness of Saints*; our Ceremonies neither too many nor too few, such as may excite and cherish and not such as may distract and
 diffi-

Rev. xix.
8.

1 Cor. xiv.
40.

dissipate our devotion. All things are done, as the Apostle would have them done, *decently and in order*; and if our piety is not eminent and conspicuous in proportion to our advantages, it is because we are wanting to ourselves, not because our Church hath been wanting in making proper provision for us.

As we have therefore such an excellent form of prayer, let us reverence it accordingly; resort to it frequently; attend to it devoutly; accompany it not only with our lips but with our hearts; repeat what we are to repeat, and answer where we are to answer, but never incroach upon another's office, never repeat the Absolution after the minister, never say our prayers aloud to disturb the rest of the congregation; join in every prayer with our mind, and in every amen with our voice, and in all respects behave like those who are in the more immediate presence of God;
and

and then will *the words of our mouths* ^{Pfal. xix.}
and the meditations of our hearts be ^{14.}
acceptable in thy sight, O Lord our
strength and our redeemer. And to
 this duty methinks we should need
 no other exhortation than that of the
 Psalmist; and if we will not do it
 for *love* let us do it for *fear*; *O wor-* ^{Pfal. xcvi.}
ship the Lord in the beauty of holiness, ^{9.}
fear before him all the earth.

But *love* is a more generous princi-
 ple than *fear*: and how thankful
 ought we to be to our heavenly Fa-
 ther for having brought us up in
 the bosom of the best and purest
 Church upon earth? and how can
 we be duly sensible of our own
 happiness without being desirous to
 communicate it to others? and what
 a pious and charitable work therefore
 is this of Yours in educating so ma-
 ny young children in the principles
 of the Church of *England*, who might
 otherwise be made a prey to a *false*
 religion, or abandon'd to *no* religion?
 Go

Go on then in the beneficent design that You have undertaken: it is a sort of godlike office, *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings to ordain strength, and perfect praise*: And every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loveth a cheerful giver. And what Christian can have the heart to refuse, when he remembers those memorable words of our Blessed Saviour? *Whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me*. And again, *Verily I say unto You, In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me*.

2 Cor. ix.
7.

Mat. xviii.
5.

—xxv.
40.

Pharisaism

Pharisaism and Popery parallel'd,

I N A

S E R M O N

Preach'd in the

Parish Church of *St. Mary-le-Bow,*

And *Grosvenor* Chapel,

*On occasion of the present Rebellion in
Scotland. October 1745.*

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THE JOURNAL OF THE

S. F. M. O. N.

THE CHURCH OF THE

AND THE

OF THE

M A T. XXIII. 13.

*Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites.*

ABUNDANCE of exhortations and reproofs there are in Scripture, which tho' directed to *particular* persons, are yet of *general* use and importance. Even those passages, which seem to be more peculiarly adapted to *certain* persons and *certain* times, may yet afford instruction to *all* persons and *all* times. And of this kind particularly is our Saviour's discourse in the 23d chapter of *St. Matthew*, which tho' pointed directly at the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, may yet serve for a perpetual warning against the vices of all those who shall tread in their steps. The *Scribes* were the great doctors and expounders of the *Jewish*

Law; and because they were usually of the sect of the *Pharisees*, therefore the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* are so frequently joined together in Scripture: And because they did *all their*
 ver. 5. *works to be seen of men*, because they *honor'd God with their lips* while *their*
 Mat. xv. 8. *hearts were far from him*, therefore our Saviour calleth them *hypocrites*. *Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites.* He observes that they
 ver. 2, 3. *fit in Moses seat*, but then *they say and do not*: As persons in authority they might be obey'd, but as examples they were by no means to be follow'd. He denounces eight severe woes against them; and I wish among Christians there may not be some sitting *in cathedra* too, to whom these woes as properly appertain, as ever they did to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* themselves. Let us take a view of them in the order, wherein they lie in the chapter, and see whether the vices of *those times* are
 not

not to be parallel'd *now*. At least it will be of some use and service to point out the rocks and shelves upon which the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* made shipwrack of faith and a good conscience, that so we may the more cautiously avoid them. For these things were written not for their sakes, but for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come.

1 Tim. i.
19.

1 Cor. x,
11.

I. The first woe denounced against them is for their shutting up the kingdom of Heaven against men, neither going in themselves, nor suffering them that were entering to go in. They shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men, they did all they could to debar men from the true religion, neither embracing it themselves, nor suffering others, who would have embraced it, to embrace it. St. Luke expresseth it more particularly by their taking away the key of knowledge: they entered not in themselves, and them that were entering in they hinder'd.

ver. 13.

Luke xi.
52.

binder'd. We must understand, that at the admission of a *Jewish* doctor a book and a key were given him, importing that he should unlock and open, that he should interpret and explain the Law of God to the people. It is in allusion to this ceremony, that our Saviour saith, that the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* had *taken away the key of knowledge*, that they had not duly opened and explained the Law of God to the people, particularly with relation to the Messiah. They had corrupted the true and genuin sense of things by their false glosses and interpretations; and in numberless instances had *made the word of God of none effect by their traditions*. And now if there be any called Christians, who thus *take away the key of knowledge*, and *shut up the kingdom of Heaven against men*, neither holding the truth themselves, nor permitting others, who would examin things, to examin them, who would profess the

Mar. vii.
13.

the truth, to profess it; will not this woe as properly belong to them, as ever it did to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*? Every body, who heareth me, must immediately reflect upon the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of *Rome*, whose practise this is, of not permitting their members, who would examin things, to examin them; a practise notorious to all, and denied by none. They not only perform their public prayers and the service of God in an unknown tongue; but will not even allow the people so much as to read the Scripture without a license from their Superiors, the Bishops or Inquisitors. And this license they grant as a particular favor, and never but at the recommendation of the Priest or Confessor, and when they are pretty secure of the person to whom they grant it. And then, when they allow the Scripture to be read, they will allow it to be read only in their own

translations, and guarded and fenced with their own annotations. Here in *England* perhaps they may be a little more indulgent, where they are only upon sufferance, and have not their people in such subjection: But where their's is the establish'd religion, and they have the power in their hands, there whosoever presumes to read the Scripture without leave is denied absolution, and in some countries it is well if he be not thrown into the prison of the Inquisition. It would make the people some amends for such a manifest abuse, if they instructed them in their duty by other means; but they have nothing of the body and substance of morality or divinity in their sermons and discourses: They *build* them (if I may thus apply a metaphor from St. *Paul*) with the *hay* and *stubble* of their Legends and Schoolmen, and not with the *silver* and *gold* of *Moses* and the Prophets or of

1 Cor. iii.
12.

of Christ and his Apostles. They eclipse and extinguish as much as they can the light of Scripture, and set up the *ignis fatuus* of tradition in it's stead. There is no need of arguments to expose such a practise. It is so contrary to all the principles of reason, so repugnant to the natural rights of mankind, so destructive of the very end and design for which the Scripture was given, that the absurdity, the tyranny, the irreligion of it sufficiently expose themselves: And really one knoweth not which to wonder at most, the cruelty and arrogance of their Clergy for acting in this manner, or the tameness and stupidity of their Laity in suffering it.

2. The next woe denounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* is for *devouring widows houses* and at the same time *for a pretence making long prayers*. They were very sanctified in appearance, but in reality they oppressed the widows and fatherless.

They

2 Tim. iii.
6.

Whitby.

They made their prayers of an intolerable length, and by these means imposed upon the credulity and superstition of *filly women*. A learned Commentator says that they continued their prayers sometimes for three hours, and perhaps sold them as the *Roman* priests do their masses. Now it is certain the *Roman* priests are not only seemingly very religious and really very extortionate, but are extortionate by the means of religion, and make their prayers and masses the grand pretence for their exactions. One of the greatest funds of the Church is the money they draw from disconsolate widows to pray the souls of their husbands and children out of Purgatory. So literally true it is, that *they devour widows houses and for a pretence make long prayers; therefore they shall receive the greater damnation.*

3. The third woe denounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* is for

for compassing sea and land to make ver. 15.
 one proselyte, and when he is made mak-
 ing him two-fold more the child of
 Hell than themselves. To illustrate
 this text Commentators cite a passage
 out of *Justin Martyr, wherein he
 says, that the proselytes do not only not
 believe, but even two-fold more than
 you (speaking to the Jews) blaspheme
 the name of Jesus. And generally
 we may observe that the converts to
 any religion are greater zealots for it
 than those who were born and bred
 up in it, I suppose the better to shew
 the sincerity of their conversion, and
 to recommend themselves the more
 effectually to their new masters and
 companions. Now the diligence of
 the Roman priests and missionaries in
 compassing sea and land to make pro-
 selytes is not at all inferior to that of
 the Scribes and Pharisees. It is really

* Οἱ ὃ προσήλυτοι ἔ μόνον ἔ πιστεύουσι ἀλλὰ διπλό-
 τερον ἡμῶν (Judæos alloquitur) βλασφημεῖσιν εἰς το ὄνομα
 αὐτοῦ Christi scilicet. Justin. apud Grotium. See Whitby
 too.

a distinguishing part of their character, and I wish the present times did not afford such melancholy proofs of it. But this we may say, it is owing to our weakness and not to their own strength, that they prevail. While we are asleep, they sow their tares. If we would but awake, we should find their best arguments no stronger than the green withs upon *Sampson's* hands; but while we lie sleeping in the lap of *Delilah*, in luxury and pleasure, they cut off our hair and deprive us of our strength. It is indeed among the poorer sort chiefly that they prevail by *bribes*, which they call *charities*. They do not so properly *make* converts, as *purchase* them: and as *Simon Magus* thought that the gift of God might be purchased with money; so they make merchandise and simony of souls, and *buy* them into their communion. 'Tis true this method doth little honor to them, but

Judg. xvi.

A&A. viii.
20.

it is the more dangerous to us, as it is in a manner *inlisting* men into their service; for every convert they make is not only the loss of a member to the Church, but of a subject to the King, the new converts, as we observed, being commonly greater bigots, and *two-fold more the children of Hell* than those who convert them.

4. The fourth woe denounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* is for their vain distinctions of *oaths*, what ^{ver. 16,} were binding and what were not, ^{&c.} when they were all alike obligatory. And will not this again put us in mind of the Schoolmen and Casuists of the Church of *Rome*, so remarkable for splitting of hairs, and making of distinctions where there is no difference? They know how to dispense with the necessity of keeping faith with Hereticks. They can instruct people how to take an oath without any intention of fulfilling it, or after they have taken it can invent

vent subterfuges and evasions, loosen the most solemn ties and engagements, discharge kings from their duty to their subjects, and absolve subjects from their allegiance to their king and country. They are the masters of the whole art of equivocations and mental reservations; and can exactly define and distinguish how a man may falsify without lying, and forswear himself without perjury. The *Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites* were nothing to them in these respects. The copy here infinitely surpasses the original.

ver. 23.

5. The fifth woe denounced against the *Scribes and Pharisees* is for *paying tithe of mint and anise and cummin*, for being superstitious and precise in the little rituals and ceremonials of religion, and at the same time *omitting the weightier matters of the law, judgment or justice, mercy or charity, and faith or trust in God, walking humbly with God* as it is in the prophet *Micah*, the love of God as it is in the parallel place of St.

Micah vi.
3.

Luke xi.
42.

Luke.

Luke. And will not this denunciation affect all such Christians, as are scrupulously observant of positive institutions, and at the same time negligent of moral duties? And will it not more particularly affect those Christians, who are wonderfully exact in counting their beads and muttering over so many *Ave Mary's*; but make no scruple of fomenting rebellions, blowing up Parliaments, overturning kingdoms, and massacring a whole people? who would not for ever so much violate a vow of chastity by marriage, but are not so nice and tender in violating the same by fornication or adultery? who are very circumstantial in their forms and ceremonies, their crossings and gesticulations at the altar; but esteem it no manner of sacrilege to take away *the cup of blessing*, and *the communion of the blood of Christ* from the people? who will hardly and not without imposing severe penances absolve

solve a man from the least offence committed against their Holy Mother the Church; but in other cases are as loose Confessors, as in these they are strict and rigid, and provided a man be but a zealot for their religion and rich withal and bountiful to Churches and Monasteries, they have store of pardons and indulgences for him, and tho' he hath lived ever so profligate he may die in peace? Surely it may be said to such men with the greatest truth and justice, *Ye blind guides, who strain at a gnat, but swallow a camel.*

ver. 24.

ver. 25.

Luke xi.
39.

Mar. vii.
3, 4.

6. The sixth woe denounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* is for their *making clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but being within full of extortion and excess, full of ravening and wickedness*, as St. *Luke* expresseth it. The *Pharisees* were very superstitious and exact in their washings and purifications; *The Pharisees wash oft*, says St. *Mark*, hold-
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ing the tradition of the elders; and many other things there be which they have received to hold as the washing of cups and pots, brasen vessels and of tables. And are not the Papists likewise very superstitious and exact in their washing and sprinkling of themselves and the things which belong to them with their holy water? It would be ridiculous even to recite the wonderful virtues, which they attribute to this holy water, and the many superstitious uses to which they apply it. They hardly ever go into or out of a Church, but they are sprinkled with some of it. On solemn days the Priest attends to perform that office, and at other times they serve themselves with it from a font placed near the Church-door for that purpose, like one of our fonts for baptism. Thus do they like the *Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter*; and whether they are not *within too*, like the *Pharisees*,

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full of extortion and excess, of ravening and wickedness, let their whole religion declare, which seemeth calculated for nothing else but to oppress the liberty and usurp the property of mankind. Well therefore might our Saviour say, and well may we say, Thou blind Pharisee, Thou blind Papist, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also; sprinkle thy heart with holy water; and let the thoughts of that be good, and the works of thy hands will be good also.

7. The seventh woe denounced against the *Scribes and Pharisees* is for being *like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also*, says our Saviour, *outwardly appear righteous, unto men, but within are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.* In short they had a form of

of godliness, but denied the power thereof; and such there are among Christians as well as among the Jews. Particular men it is hard to judge; but it is certain no sect have more of the form and shew and pageantry of religion than the Romanists; and it is to be feared none have less of the power of it, as where there are most leaves, there commonly is least fruit. I wish it is not even *litterally* true of their religious houses, considering the magnificence of the buildings, and what things are transacted within them; I say I wish it is not even *litterally* true, that *they appear indeed beautiful outward, but are within full of all uncleanness*. It is the prerogative of God alone to know the hearts of men: but surely so many forms and ceremonies are enough to eat out the very life and substance of religion; and if all was pure and genuin, what need of so much paint and varnish? A plain neatness and

simplicity in dress and behaviour is the distinguishing characteristic of the *beauty of holiness* as well as of other beauty. Its greatest ornament is to want none.

ver. 29,
&c.

8. The last woe denounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* is for their *honoring of dead Saints*, at the same time when they *persecuted the living*. They *built the tombs of the prophets, and garnished the sepulchres of the righteous*, and at the same time *filled up the measure of their fathers, killing and crucifying some prophets and wise men, scourging and persecuting others from city to city*. But the *Papists* far exceed them; for they not only *build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous*, but honor them with costly shrines and rich offerings, and make as many prayers and vows to them as to God, or the Son of God blessed for ever. Nor are they less uncharitable and cruel in persecuting the living

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than they are fond and superstitious in honoring the dead. We need not look abroad for instances; our own annals will furnish us with pages enow written, as I may say, in characters of blood. We need not go so far as the persecutions in *Germany*, or the massacre in *France*; the butcheries in the reign of *Queen Mary*, the powder-plot in the reign of *King James* the first, and the massacre of above 100,000 Protestants in *Ireland* in the reign of his son, will stand as monuments of their cruelty, as long as ever the nation or history of *England* shall last. And if we should still connive at the growth of Popery, and suffer their numbers to increase as they have done of late years, who can be our security, that the like bloody tragedies may not, and will not be acted again? They cannot indeed do what the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* did, crucify the *Lord of glory*; but they do

as much like it as they possibly can, they persecute him in his disciples and followers, those who adhere to his doctrine, those who tread in his steps. And we know very well, that the injuries done to his disciples our Saviour resents as done to himself. *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*, said he to *Paul* when he persecuted the poor Christians; and in another place (whether of acts of mercy or acts of cruelty it is the same) *Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me.*

Act. ix. 5.

Mat. xxv.
40, 45.

And thus, I think, it appears that every woe denounced against the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* is at least equally applicable, if not more applicable, to the *Priests* and *Votaries* of the *Church of Rome*. Indeed it is almost impossible to read this account of the former, without thinking at the same time of the latter. The likeness is so very great, the resemblance

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is so very strong, that it striketh one immediately. Nor are these the only features, wherein they resemble one another. The *Pharisees fasted* Mat. ix. 14. oft according to St. *Matthew*; and do not the Papists likewise keep frequent fasts and vigils? The *Pharisees*, as St. *Luke* and St. *John* inform Act. xxiv. 14. John. vii. 49. us, counted those, who differed from them, *Heretics* and *accursed*: and do not the Papists likewise call all those *Heretics* who are of a different persuasion, and exclude all Protestants from all hopes of salvation? The *Pharisees* were strenuous assertors of the privileges and immunities of the people of God; they were always for lessening the authority of the civil magistrate, and advancing their own; they even doubted whether it was *lawful to pay tribute unto Cæsar or not*: Mat. xxii. 17. and do not the Popish Clergy likewise plead their particular privileges and exemptions? have they not in all times endeavor'd to raise the power

ecclesiastical upon the ruins of the civil power? History abounds with examples in this kind: but fix upon the reign of our brave *Henry* the second, and see whether their renown'd *Thomas Becket* be not a *saint* and a *martyr* for the very same reasons, for which we should reckon him, and justly reckon him, a *rebel* to his king and a *traytor* to his country. The *Pharisees* suffer'd that part of the temple, which was a *house of prayer for all nations*, to be made a *den of thieves*: and is it not notorious, that the *Papists* make their Churches their sanctuaries, and sanctuaries for the vilest of robbers and murderers? We have traced the comparison no farther than we have the authority of Scripture; farther we might trace it: but for my part I take no great pleasure in drawing the parallel; I am more sorry that they give the occasion.

Mar. xi.
17.

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The true use and design of this discourse is not merely to expose their faults, but to expose them so as that we may avoid them; and that since the Papists and *Pharisees* are so like *one another*, we may take effectual care to be like *neither*. Our Saviour said to his disciples, *Except* Mat. v. 20. *your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of Heaven:* And what then will He say to those Christians, who are so far from *exceeding the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*, that they even adopt their greatest vices and improve them?

And what a horrid and impious attempt then is this to impose Popery upon us with a Popish Pretender, for a Popish Prince would soon make way for the Popish religion, and the Popish religion is attended with all these evils which you have heard, and many more! The *Protestant religion*

religion can be supported only by supporting the *Protestant succession*; and if it should please God for our sins to punish us with a change--- But do not Thou, O gracious Lord God, for the many and crying sins of this nation, deliver us over into the hands of our enemies, nor punish us according to our iniquities, but protect and prosper us after thy great mercy and goodness ---- But if it should please God for our sins to punish us with a change, what a change would it be! a change from liberty to slavery, from the purest religion to the grossest idolatry and superstition, from a mighty kingdom to a province of *France*, from a flourishing Church to a servile dependency upon the See of *Rome*, from the legal and mild government of a Protestant King to the arbitrary exactions and heavy oppressions of a Popish Tyrant! Nor let any be deluded with a vain notion, that he would

would be contented with the enjoyment of his religion, and leave us freely to exercise our own; even tho' he should make such a promise and declaration. They must be very *willing* to be deceived indeed, who can be deceived by such empty pretences. For it is the nature of that religion not to tolerate any other, but to endeavor to build and establish itself upon the ruins of all: and they will stop at nothing right or wrong for this purpose, the *goodness* of the *end*, as they think, will sanctify the most *unrighteous means*: and in fact there never was a Popish Prince, but he attempted to make his own the religion of his country, and has too often succeeded in the attempt, as *Saxony*, the *Palatinate*, and other countries once Protestant, now oppress'd with Popery, can testify. And for any promises and protestations which such a Prince may be induced
to

to make, we know very well that he may be dispensed with to make them, and dispensed with from keeping them; it is the profess'd doctrine of that Church, that they are not obliged to keep faith with Heretics, and especially when the good of their Church requires otherwise, which is superior to all other obligations. And if we have not yet learned this from their *doctrines*, we may learn it from their *practises*, and the experience of former ages. When Queen *Mary* was first proclaimed, she engaged to the men of *Suffolk* who had been the principal instruments of her advancement to the throne, that *she would make no change or alteration in the state of religion*, and declared in Council that *she would use no force in matters of religion, but leave every one to enjoy liberty of conscience*; and yet every child knoweth what cruelties
were

were afterwards committed in her reign, how many excellent Bishops and Martyrs were burnt at the stake, how many others were imprison'd, fin'd, and tortur'd, or fled their country, and this flourishing island became a scene of desolation and a field of blood! And in like manner King *James* the second upon his accession declared in Council (which declaration was printed and dispersed amongst the people) that *he would preserve the government in Church and State as it was established by law; nay he would always take care to defend and support the Church of England.* And what he said to his Council, he repeated again in his speech to the Parliament, and in the very same words, *the better to evidence to You, says he, that I spoke them not by chance, and consequently that you may firmly rely upon a promise so solemnly made.* And yet how this
 promise

promise so solemnly made and his coronation oath were observed by him, no body need be told; all the world sufficiently knows and remembers. And can any of his *pretended descendents* give us stronger assurances than these? or are they more to be depended upon, and better to be trusted? they who have been bred up in the very bosom of *Rome*, and consequently are more bigotted and devoted to it, and under stronger obligations to promote it's interests: they who can never succeed here without the support and assistance of our inveterate and implacable enemies, and consequently if they succeed must establish the *arbitrary government* of *France* or *Spain*, as well as the *corrupt* and *cruel religion* of *Rome*! We may frame some judgment of their intentions and purposes by their adherents, who are nothing but a wicked

wicked crew of robbers and plunderers, or if of any religion *Scotch* and *Irish* Papiſts. Every *Englishman* and Protestant muſt abhor ſuch an unnatural conſpiracy and rebellion; the wiſeſt and moſt moderate of the Papiſts themſelves cannot approve it; it can be favor'd only by the moſt deſperate bigots of that religion among ourſelves, and foreign Popiſh ſervants and others, of whom it is matter of loud and general complaint that there is ſo great a number in the nation, and thoſe chiefly in the beſt and greateſt families. God give us grace and wiſdom that we may *ſee the things which belong unto our peace before they are hid from our eyes!* And ſurely you will not need any other admonition; it will be ſufficient to admoniſh you in the words of St. Peter: *Ye therefore,* ^{2 Pet. iii.} *beloved, ſeeing ye know theſe things* ^{17, 18.} *before, beware leſt ye alſo being led away*

away with the error of the wicked;
 fall from your own steadfastness; but
 grow in grace and in the knowledge
 of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;
 to Him be glory both now and for
 ever. Amen.

F I N I S.